

T Y T H E S

Proved unlawfull to be paid unto Ministers of the Gospel, for or towards their maintenance, both by Divine and Humane Right.

By answering a letter sent by a Priest to his parishioners, (here is a Coppy of the letter verbatim) to perswade them to pay Tythes.

Minst. **C** Concerning the maintenance of the Minister, consider these propositions.

Prop. 1. It is the Law of Christ that the Ministers of the Gospel should live of the Gospel, as the reward of their labour, Luke. 10. 7.

Prop. 2. This maintenance of the Ministers of the Gospel, is not to be left to the peoples choice, whether they will maintain their Minister or not, but the magistrate ought to require the people to *Maintaine* their Minister according as God shall prosper them, Rom. 13. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

Reason 1. The reason is, first, because that in the time of the Law, there was a certain maintenance for the Ministers of the law, and if the people were negligent therein, the governours of the people required it in the behalf of the Minister; Therefore there ought to be a certain maintenance for the Ministers of the Gospel, that the Magistrate may require it, for there is no ceremony in the certainty of it. 2. Because Ministers are bound to instruct and feed the people, Acts 20. 28: Therefore the people are bound to maintain their Minister; for by the same reason that the people should be free to the maintaining of their Minister, the Minister should be left free to feed the people. 3. Because experience teacheth us, if men were left to their own liberty, Ministers should not have wherewith to maintain themselves, families, and to give to the poor, as is required, 1 Tim. 3. 2, 3, 4, 5: for some would give little or nothing through covetousnesse, others though the Lord were pleased to increase the fruits of the ground, yet the Minister should suffer for their ill husbandry, they will pretend, they are behind hand when the fault is their own, &c. Others would meerly dislike the Minister that they might allow him no maintenance: The truly considerable are but few in the visible Church, Mat. 7. 14.

Prop. 3 Although Tenths are not required in the Gospel, a competent and sufficient maintenance is; the Magistrate may require tenths, as an equal and competent maintenance.

Rel. 1. The reason it is a most equal way to have every thing in its kind according as God shall prosper them, as is the Apostles rule, Gal. 6. 6. That is, he is to make him partakers of part of his increase.

2. The tenths is the corne of the barne, and the abundance of the wine presse, Num. 18. 27. that is, more or lesse as God shall give increase unto the fruits of the earth; which is the most equal and indifferent way, for then the Minister as God blesteth them shall partake of their blessings, and if they suffer losse, he likewise beareth the burthen with them.

3. 'The tenths being first appointed of God must needs be an equal way for Ministers and people to live on. 1. Because Gods waies
"are all equal waies, and I desire to know, in what tithes were or
"can be ceremonial, as they are the maintenance of the Ministers?

4. 'The tenths were bestowed upon the Ministers by the Parliament
"with the voluntary consent of the people, as a most equal main-
"tenance, and as long as the Parliament continues it, Ministers have
"the same right to it, as the people have to their land, and the rest
"of their corne, even the Law of the Kingdom.'

Prop. 1. Whereas the Minister said, "it is the Law of Christ, that the
"Ministers of the Gospel should live of the Gospel, as a reward of
"their labour, Luke 10. 7.

I acknowledge it is true, that is the portion the Lord Jesus hath laid them out in the Gospel, for the maintenance of their Ministry, the free gift of the people set before them, Mat. 10. 8. Luk. 10. 7. 1 Cor. 9. 9. Rom. 15. 26. 2 Cor. 9. 7. 10. And all other portions are idolatrous inventions of covetous or distrustfull men, which like not Christs maintenance for their ministry, but will make or cause to be made another portion besides Chr. as though the Lord of all the earth had not had wisdom to appoint sufficient wages for his labourers in his vineyard, or had been so negligent to leave them unprovided for when they had laboured: Therefore flee not from your first foundation, for that is the true portion; and that Minister which is not content with that portion is an Idolater, Ephes. 5. coveting that which is not by the Lord appointed him, makes and adds a maintenance to himself, whereby he breaks the second commandment, Exod. 20. 4. and brings all the curses in Gods book upon himself, Rev. 18. denies Christs provision (for the maintenance of his Ministers) to be sufficient, and ought not to be permitted a member of any Church of Christ, Psal. 101. 3, 4. Jer. 15. 17. 19. nor yet com-
municated

communicated with by any that truly obey the Lord Jesus, *Psal.* 26. 45:
2 *Cor.* 6. 17.

Prop. 2. "Whereas you say the Ministers maintenance is not left
"to the peoples choice whether they will maintain their Minister or
"not, but the Magistrate ought to require the people to maintaine
"him, from *Rom.* 13. 4, 5, 6, 7.

I answer, you are more desirous of money, then conscionable of
the truth; for the first you alledge from *Luke* 10. 7. it is by the free
gift of the people; now you leave that, and flee to *Rom.* 13. 5, 6, 7.
contradicting the former; for if it be free, as it is, the worldly Magi-
strates, (which you plead for) have nothing to do with it. And you
know there were no Christian Magistrates that did help to maintain
Christs Ministers in all the Apostles time, neither had Christs Mini-
sters any other portion then the peoples free gift, *Lu.* 10. 7. And I
marvel Popery should so reign in you in abusing scripture as you do,
Rom. 13. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. were not all Magistrates then heathen, worship-
pers of *Diana*? *Acts* 19. 27. and did they force or appoint mainte-
nance for Christs Ministers? nay, they persecuted them, and spoiled
what they had by free disposition of the people of the Church provi-
ded for them, *Heb.* 10. 34. and doth not that taxe binde Ministers and
people to pay custome and tribute to those heathen magistrates, not of
the Church? Wherefore I pray let not covetousnesse cause you to
take the name of God in vain in abusing scripture to make a colour
to blind well affected people. Thus your doctrine and inference being
both answered, all your following reasons, which are but to illus-
trate them are of no validitie; for when the foundation of a building
is taken away, there will be no reminder left, that needs any pulling
downe.

Reas. 1. And whereas you alledge, "in the time of the Law, there
"was a certain maintenance for the Ministers of the Law, and if the
"people were negligent therein, the governours of the people required
"it in the behalf of the Minister; Therefore there ought to be a certain
"maintenance for the Ministers of the Gospel, that the Magistrates
"may require it, for there is no ceremony in the certaintie of it.

I answer, in the time of the Law, the Church was terrestrial, *Heb.* 12.
22. and had earthly power, and was only in *Jerusalem*, and no where
else, *Acts* 17. 30. yet the Magistrate in that time required it not of a-
ny but those of the Church which were willing, *Psal.* 110. 3. for in
Hezechiabs his time 10. Tribes were not under his power, and of them
he had no jurisdiction, 2 *Cbro.* 30. 10. and many of the *Hittites*, *Pe-*

razites and Gergazites, &c. were lett in the land, *Ezra* 9. 1. They brought nothing to offer in sacrifice, for the hire of a whore, and price of a dog, they never (through covetousness) put in the sacrifice of their God, *Deut.* 23. 18. And Christ Jesus when he made his great spiritual Supper, never forced nor required any thing, but of those that made excuse, or refused to come, *Luk.* 14. 24. though he was angry with them, but refused their company at his spiritual banquet, and when they were out of *Canaan* the Priests in the law must live by the free gift of the people, or else have nothing, and this land is not terrestrial *Canaan*, and for celestial I believe you will acknowledge *Eng.* 2. 24. is not; therefore of no use but to bindfold people to satisfy the inordinate desire of covetous *Ministers*, or belly-gods of this time, who would be Christs servants, but like *or* his wages: And now *Christs Church* is a celestial Church, with heavenly power, and no earthly power, *2 Cor.* 10. 4. *Mat.* 26. 5, *Rev.* 13. 10. wherefore if you will inter from the Law to the Gospel, as then the portion that *Christ* appointed for his *Ministers* was required by the Magistrate of the Church, of the flock of the same Church, that they might eat of the milk of the same flock, *1 Cor.* 9. 7. and not milk other flocks: So now the *Deacon* or *Ruler* who are Magistrates in the Church, may (by their spiritual power, in this spiritual Church) require (if the flock be able) maintenance for their *Minister*, but if the flock be not able, he must work and maintain himselfe, *1 Cor.* 9. 12. *Acts* 20. 34. *1 Thes.* 2. 9. for no good shepherd sheares his flock in winter, but tarry till they can spare the fleece, and that the burthen of it will hurt them if it be not taken from them; and did ever the Jewes go to other then Church power for their *Ministers* maintenance? did they go to worldly power? they were never so beastly, and I am sure tis more bateness now, *Heb.* 2. 2. for Christs *Ministers* to runne to worldly power (not permitted to have being in Christs spiritual Kingdom. *1 Cor.* 7. 23. *1 Cor.* 6. 12.) for help for maintenance for their *Ministers*. If an Ambassador of a worldly king should go a begging to other Kingdomes (though friends to the king) for mony to bear his charges in his Ambassage, (saying, provide better for us, we cannot live on our masters provision) were it not abusing their King, and dealing basely with him, how much more this? They that like not Christs wages, need not meddle with his work.

Minister. And whereas you say, *there is no ceremony in the certainty of it,*

Answer,

(5)

I answer, Tythes are a ceremony of the Law, *Heb* 7. 12. 13. and therefore the Law of Tythes must needs be changed, and the Priesthood of the Gospel belonged to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the Altar; for our Lord sprang out of *Judah*, who is made not after the carnal commandments, for the Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of better hope then tythes, or a *Levitical* priesthood was, and the certainty of it was likewise a ceremony, pointing out the certain riches the Lord in his Priesthood should bring, (at his coming to be borne in the flesh) unto the Soules of his people, more then they had in the former age, *John* 14. 26. and the certainty of a better Testimony, established upon better promises, *Heb*. 8. 6. and a better Kingdome that cannot be shaken, *Heb*. 12. 28. Therefore taking and paying of tythes, denies Christ come in the flesh, and the better hope the Gospel affordeth more then the Law, *Heb*. 7. 19.

Reas. 2. Your second reason is, *Because Ministers be bound to instruct and feed the people*, *Acts* 20. 28. Therefore the people are bound to maintain their Minister, for by the same reason the people should be left free to the maintenance of their Minister, the Minister should be left free to feed the people.

I answer, you see the Minister is left free, how big a portion he brings unto them every Sabbath day, so by your own argument, the people ought to be left free, how big a portion they will contribute or provide, or give unto him; Thus you are forced by Gods over-ruling power to confess the truth (as *Balaam* did) in the striving for idolatrous maintenance.

Reas. 3. Your 3. reason is, *because experience teacheth us, if men were left to their own liberties, Ministers should not have enough wherewith to maintain themselves, families, and to give to the poor, as is required*, *1 Tim.* 2. 3. 4. 5. For some people would give little or nothing through covetousnesse, others though the Lord were pleased to increase the fruits of the ground, yet the Minister should suffer for their ill husbandry, they will pretend they are behind hand, when the fault is their own, &c. Others would meerly mislike the Minister, that they might allow him no maintenance; the truly considerable are but few in the visible Church, *Mat.* 7. 14.

Whereas you say experience teacheth, &c.

I answer, it is infidelity, you dare not trust the Lord of life with your body, whom you say you dare trust with your Soul, Surely if he will save the Soul, he will not starve the body: Thus wanting faith to believe, you are carryed with carnality, to condemn the Lord in his provision: If *Abraham* had reasoned thus with flesh and blood, he had never sacrificed (in his purpose) *Isaac* his Son, nor yet been counted the Father of the faithfull. Pray cast away carnality, abate.

abate a little pompe, and follow the example of thote that wandred in leather raiment, whom the word was not worthy of, *Heb. 11. 37.* and sell not your Soules to Satan, (as *Balaam* did *Numb. 22.*) for a little paltrey pelth.

2. And whereas you alladge, you are required to give unto the poor; I marvel you dare abuse the minde of the holy Ghost so vilely, to gea your selves mony. Is there any such words in *1 Tim. 3. 2, 3, 4, 5*? are not the words these, *given to hospitality*, that is, a man free from covetousnesse, one that if he have spare, will freely let his poor brethren partake with him in that he enjoyeth. I pray what and to whom did *Paul* give when he was hungry and naked, *2 Cor. 6. 4. 10.* Surely he wanted for himselfe, and then could not give others. Then cast away pride and covetousnes, and your eyes will be the clearer to see the true interpretation of the Gospel.

3. And whereas you say, some people would give nothing through covetousnesse; I believe it is true, if you must needs have a *Babylonious Church*, of all, good and bad together, *Rev. 18. 4.* For in *Babel* Christs word is of little power or none, (except to condemn) but in *Zion* such people are not appointed of God to have being, *Psa. 10. 7.* But carnal *Ministers* must have carnal maintenance, and carnal company; but such shall never stand accepted before the Lord, neither be his mouth unto his people, because they take not the precious from the vile, *Jer. 15. 19. Rev. 18. 4.*

4 And whereas you say, others would allow them nothing, &c. neither would they be of his Church, if he were in Christs Church. For he that is upright in his waies, is an abomination to the wicked, *Pro. 29. 27.* they are not able to endure there, nor yet long to hear him; experience teacheth the same, Where the true Church is they will flee away of themselves, the word of God doth so pierce their very thoughts, *Heb. 4. 12.*

5. And whereas you say, the truly considerable are but few in the visible Church, from *Mat. 7. 14.*

It is true, therefore not whole parishes, as you would have it, but if one of a parish, or two of a bigger company come to *Zion*, *Jeremiahs* prophecy is fulfilled; *Jer. 3. 14.* And the way is narrow and few find it, and the gate strait, and few enter; *Mat. 7. 13.* And let the rest alone in *Babel*, till God pull his peculiar thence.

And whereas you alledge, although tenths are not required in the Gospel, a competent and sufficient maintenance is; therefore the Magistrate may require Tenths, as an equal and competent maintenance.

Thus you confesse in the Gospel, Tenths are not Christs appointed wages for the maintenance of his Ministers; Therefore tenths for the maintenance of Christs Ministers are not of God by your own grant; if not of God,

God, then of the devil: And whosoever receiveth It for the maintenance of his ministry, receiveth the portion of the Devil, and he that payeth any, payeth the devils portion, and serveth him as the children of Israel did, *Levit. 17. 7.*

2. And whereas you say, *a competent maintenance is allowed the Minister.*

I confesse it, but the difference is, whether Christs appointed portion is a competent maintenance for his Ministers, or whether the Magistrate can set a more equal one then he hath? I answer, Christs portion in his Gospel, is a sufficient maintenance for all his Ministers, and all other portions are unequal, idolatrous, and rebellious against Christs commandments, *Col 2. 21. 22. Rev. 22. 18.*

3. And whereas you alledge, *Tenths is the equalest portion* I answer if it be, and Christ hath not appointed it, (as you affirme) then Christ hath not appointed the equalest portion for his Ministers maintenance; then he hath not done well, then he is a sinner, Then faith is vain, and all are dead in their sins that look for salvation by him: Thus for many you fear not to blaspheme the very Saviour of the world.

4. And whereas you alleadge *Tenths were bestowed upon the Ministers by the Parliament, with the voluntary consent of the people, as a most equal maintenance, and as long as the Parliament continueth it, Ministers have right unto it, as the people have to their goods, lands and the rest of their corne, even the Law of our Kingdome.*

I answer the *Tenths* were by Parliament and by consent of the people established for Massing Priests to read Masse; therefore an idolatrous gift, an Idolatrous establishment, unlawful in the giver, unlawful in the actors, and therefore remaines in their right heirs that gave it, and Parliaments and people ought all to repent of such a cursed action; And if you alleadge that King Ed. altered it, I answer, he changed the Idol maintenance from the Latin Masse Priests, to the English mass Priests, witness his pacifying the Cornish men, & the Parliaments overthrowing the English masse or Service-book; & pray tell me whether God ordained the Parliament to make Laws for his Ministers maintenance, or appointed them to take the Laws his Son Christ Jesus had made concerning their maintenance in his worship: If Parliaments be to appoint it, then all the primitive age, I mean (not the primitive age of anti-christ) the Ministers of the Gospel had nothing appointed them by the Lord Jesus to live by when they had laboured, which is a shame to affirme; Therefore hear what the Prophet *Esaiab* saith, to Gods Law, (if you look for salvation by Jesus Christ) and his testimony, if any speak not according to this word, it is because the light is not in them, and

and they shall passe through it hardly bestead, and hungry; and that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their King, and their God, and look upwards, and they shall look upon the earth, and behold trouble and darknesse, dimnesse of anguish, and they shall be driven to darknesse. And now you that say Gods way of provision for his Ministers is not equal, but your way of provision for them is equal; hearken unto these;

Every true Minister of the Gospel of Christ, is well contented with the wages which Christ hath appointed for his maintenance in the Ministry, *Pb. 4. 11.* Ye therefore (that are the *Ministers* of the Church of *England*) are not content with the wages Christ hath appointed in his Gospel for your maintenance, because you are not the true Ministers of Christ.

2. Those that make a maintenance for the *Ministers* of the Gospel, other then Christ hath made in his written word, are Idolators, under Gods curse, and breakers of the second commandment, *1 Sam. 15, 22. Ephes. 5. Ps. 115. 8. Rev. 22 8. Deu. 5. 32. Col. 2. 21. Ex. 20. 45.* Ye therefore (that are of the Church of *England*) are idolaters under Gods curse, and breakers of the second commandment, Because ye have made a maintenance for Ministers other then Christ hath made in his written word.

3. Those that take or require maintenance (for their Ministry) other then the Lord Christ hath appointed in his Gospel, deny Christ to reigne over them in appointing them wages, *Luke 19. 27. Isa. 24. 56.*

Ye therefore (that are Ministers of the Church of *England*) deny Christ to reigne over you, in appointing you your wages.

Because you take and require other maintenance for your Ministry then Christ hath appointed in his Gospel.

To him will the Lord look that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at his word. He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man, he that sacrifices a Lamb as if he cut off a dogs neck, he that offereth an oblation as if he offered Swines blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an Idol; yea, they have chosen their own waies, and their Soul delighteth in their abominations.

Now we pray you in Christs stead, be ye reconciled unto God.

For he that gathered much had nothing over, & he that gathered little had no lack, *1 Cor. 5. 20. 2 Cor. 8. 15. Exod. 16. 18.*

By I. T.

THE E N D.

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